OFFRET2

First Presbyterian Church of Lake Forest

Officers Retreat

May 18-19, 1990

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SESSION TWO

Review - as necessary - theology of God calling to journey

Theme this morning is that God provides what we need for the journey of faith to which he calls us.

What we need is not always what we want - or think we need.

A reading from John Updike

The Wallet (copies O. 222-237)

Bible Study EXODUS 1

More on Journey motif

Israel in Egypt - tribes - thrive - slavery

in meantime Moses is being prepared.

miraculous survival, grows up in bull rushes

official household, murders Egyptian,

hides - hears voice - returns burning bush

stirs up trouble, organizes Israel,

negotiates - successfully.

Israel walks out - to Red Sea

1st incident -

Ex. 14:10-12

It would have been better to

serve the Egyptians than to die

in wilderness.

The Escape

The wilderness

2nd 16:1-3 hunger

quails & manna

3rd 17:1-7 Thirst & water

Comment -

"Murmuring motif" in the wilderness

people prefer security to freedom . . .

stability to journey/adventure

routine to novelty . .

(one of the reasons to be wary of Perestroika, Glasnost, etc.)

personally - a psychological dynamic

Freud and separation anxiety. - child's basic fear.

Bonus - Bettleheim and the power of "Leaving Home"

need for security - at all ages

fairy tales (Uses of Enchantment)

but Leaving home is necessary to become full person -

it is also dangerous as all sorts of fairy tale characters learn

- Hansel & Gretel
- Little Red Riding Hood

a sense - that life is always calling us to leave settled securities behind.

the danger of settling for comfort :

Cite Kurt Hahn and Outward Bound, WWII and Gordonston School -

early days of WWII young Brit. sailors not survive like older mates

after war O.B. Schools -

("To Serve & Strive and Not to Yield") ↑ tell Hurricane Island

(we are addicted to ease/comfort - and may miss a lot)

Harriet Tubman and underground railroad

slaves not as bad as risks of freedom

The Personal Dimension

It OT — God comes and provides in wilderness: when people are vulnerable, poor - empty - and have left their

securities.

same is true spirtually - the point of Jesus' parables about loaded camel making it through eye of needle.

we have to be needy in order to receive God's good gifts.

If there is preferential regard for poor in Bible it's because poor people know their need.

Nowen on Prayer - With Open Hands

our trouble is - our hands are too full

tells about psychotic woman in E.R.

clutching a small coin as if she'd lose life if she released her grip.

(without that wallet, I'm nothing)

H. N. quote - p. 5 3/18/90 (X)

daring promise is, God will provide

-give us resources we need for the journey

There are occasions when we must leave established securities

-at 6 - to school

-at 18 - to college

(X)

"When you are invited to pray you are asked to open your tightly clenched fists and give up your last coin. You hold fast to what is familiar, even if you aren't proud of it. You find yourself saying: 'That's just how it is with me. I would like to be different but it can't be now...' Once you talk like that you've already given up believing that your life might be otherwise. You feel it safer to cling to a sorry past than to trust in a new future."
[With Open Hands, p. 4]

-marriage

-new career or unemployment

-empty nest

-divorce

-loss of friends

comes a day when we know our poverty - hunger and thirst.

Promise is, God will provide.

Journal - Gift Inventory

Personal - What has God given you?

- What do you most need?

Church - Same

Discussion - (3's)

Closing - John 4:7-15

- when if all we have going for us is strength youth bank account stock position

when we know our powerlessness to deal w/ our humanness - our mortality

at hands of approach

Egyptians - or clock..